

# VALENTIN NIKOLAIEVITCH VOLOSHINOV: DOCUMENTED DETAILS OF HIS LIFE AND WORKS<sup>1</sup>

Sheila Vieira de Camargo GRILLO\*  
Ekaterina Vólkova AMÉRICO\*\*

- **ABSTRACT:** In this article, we report on and describe findings from our research, conducted at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences Archives, where we consulted documents from the Institute of Comparative History of Literatures and Languages of East and West (ILIAZV), and where Valentin Nikolaievitch Voloshinov worked between 1925 and 1932. The bibliographic research allowed us to understand the academic, and even personal, trajectory of this author, during the period in which he wrote *Marxism and the philosophy of language* and *Fundamental problems with the sociological method in the science of language*, among other works. The primary findings of this archival consultation include: a strong presence of Marxist theory in various activities of the ILIAZV; the participation of Voloshinov in those activities; Voloshinov's work in the sector of literature methodology; the presence of themes of works by Medvedev and Bakhtin, found in Voloshinov's reports to the ILIAZV; the recognition of Voloshinov's academic merits by ILIAZV researchers; Voloshinov's work methods; and, finally, changes in Soviet academic institutions between 1925 and 1932.
- **KEYWORDS:** Voloshinov. Bakhtin circle. ILIAZV archives.

## Introduction

Valentin Nikolaievitch Voloshinov's archives were first released in 1955, in the second edition of *Dialogue, Carnival, Chronotope* by Nikolai A. Pankov, the then Editor-in-Chief of the publication. The material originated from the State Archives of the Russian Federation (GARF), located in Moscow, and affirms that Voloshinov

---

\* University of São Paulo (USP), Faculty of Philosophy, Letters and Human Sciences, São Paulo – SP – Brazil. Professor at the Department of Classical and Vernacular Letters. sheilagrillo@uol.com.br.

\*\* Federal Fluminense University (UFF), Institute of Letters, Niterói – RJ – Brazil. Professor at the Department of Modern Foreign Letters. katia-v@ya.ru.

<sup>1</sup> *Institut sravnitelnoi istorii literatur i iazykov Zapada i Vostoka*. The research in the archives of ILIAZV in St. Petersburg, Russia, was conducted between March and June, 2016, by Sheila Grillo with the financial of a PQ grant from CNPq (Proc. 309502/2014-4). The reading and interpretation of the manuscripts, as well as the production of an article were done in collaboration by Sheila V. C. Grillo and Ekaterina Vólkova Américo.

Translator: Jennifer Sarah Cooper

was “a real person and not a myth” or even Bakhtin’s alter ego (VASSÍLIEV, 1995, p. 5), as many at that time presumed. Some 21 years later, we return to Voloshinov’s archives, not only to the material stored at GARF, but also, and primarily those held at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences Archives (*Sankt-Peterbúrgski Filial Arkhiva* - RAN), having conducted our research there in the first semester of 2016. The question that arises is, what is the importance of this work to the present day? Firstly, the forthcoming publication of the translation of *Marxism and the philosophy of language* – the first, and the second Russian editions – and articles signed by Voloshinov (currently being translated), both from the original Russian, deserve, in our view, clarification, based on factual data, with respect to the texts attributed to Valentin Nikolaievitch Voloshinov, since the Brazilian public, as well as a great many Russian researchers are accustomed to attributing those works to Mikhail Bakhtin. Even though the controversy over the authorship of those works has not been resolved, we believe that the archival material, described in detail in this article, can help us understand the discrepancy at stake. Secondly, the research carried out at the archives of the Institute of Comparative History of Literature and Languages of East and West (*Institút Sravnitelnoi Istórii literatúr i iazykóv Západa i Vostóka* ILIAZV), proffered a portrait of the ideological and academic context. In addition – and perhaps the most relevant aspect – it provides a clear picture of Bakhtin Circle’s process of production – at least some of it – since articles and books signed by Voloshinov, as part of the reports on his activities at the Institute, demonstrate his contribution to the development of the sociological method in linguistic and literary theory. This was a method developed in the Subsection – Literature Methodology.

In this article, we will reconstruct facts related to the work of Valentin Nikolaievitch Voloshinov at the ILIAZV between 1924 and 1932, which, in 1930, was renamed the State Institute for Cultural Linguistics (*GIRK Gossudárstvennyi Institút Retchevói Kultúry*). We do not intend to write a comprehensive history of the Institute, nor an exhaustive biography of Voloshinov<sup>2</sup>. However, we do endeavor to produce a portrait of a particular period in the academic life of this author, which is corroborated by records found at the St. Petersburg Branch of the RAN, and at the GARF (from documents published by PANKOV, 1995). The data consulted in the archive provide contact with the concrete identity of an author who, after his death, on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1936 (VASSÍLIEV, 1995, p.15), was practically forgotten until his name and publications appeared in Russian, associated with the work of Mikhail Bakhtin in the beginning of the 1970s, after the well-known pronouncement by Viatcheslav Ivanov (2009, 1995). In the 1990s and 2000s, articles and books by Voloshinov saw new editions – first in the collection, *Philosophy and Sociology of the Human Sciences* (1995b), which included an introductory essay by Vassiliev defending Valentin Voloshinov as the author, displaying the “Bakhtin Circle” on the cover, together with Voloshinov’s name. In addition, a collection that followed – *Bakhtin behind the mask* (2000), collected work originally

---

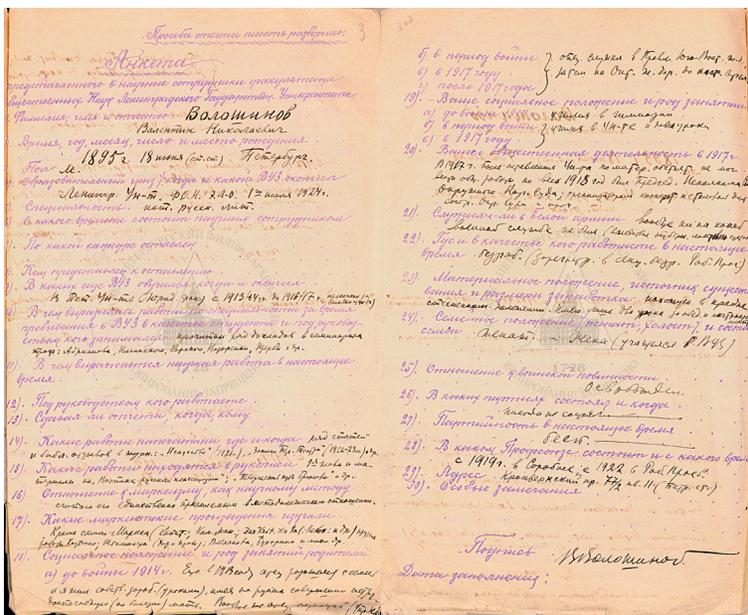
<sup>2</sup> Valentin Voloshinov’s biography was written by the Russian researcher Nikolai Vassiliev (1995).

published under the name of Voloshinov and Medvedev, in the 1920s, presenting them as “masks” of Bakhtin.

## Enrollment and participation in ILIAZV

Valentin Nikolaievitch Voloshinov was accepted into the ILIAZV on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1925 as a collaborator (*sverkhchétnyi sotrudnik*). On the enrollment form found in Voloshinov’s folder (Figura 1), we find information about his financial and family situation.

Figure 1 – Copy of the registration form for V. Voloshinov in ILIAZV (1924).



Source: Fond 302, op. 2, no. 51, page 3.

His father was an official at the administration of railways and abandoned the family in 1913, when Voloshinov was 18 years old. His mother had an illness that made it impossible for her to work. Due to these circumstances, Voloshinov reports that he made a living giving private lessons and went through a period of extreme financial difficulty. He was unemployed and married to a student. He reports that, at that time he was accustomed to teaching two classes in exchange for lunch and an insignificant amount of money. He did not serve in the army because of tuberculosis. Along with this personal information, the following data are detailed:

Date and place of birth: June 18, 1895 in St. Petersburg

Date and place of completion of higher education: University of Leningrad on June 1, 1924.

In what other institutions of higher education have you studied and degrees completed? At the University of St. Petersburg (Faculty of Law) of 1913/1914 to 1916/17. I did not finish because I withdrew from the university.<sup>3</sup>

Texts published during this period: magazines *Iskústvo* 1921 and *Zapiski Peredvijnógo Teatra* 1922-1923.

Give your opinion about Marxism as a scientific method: *I think it is the only acceptable method.*

What are the Marxists works you have studied:

*Aside from works by Marx himself, I have read the work of Plekhanov, Bukharin, etc.*

Current party affiliation:

*Not affiliated with any party.*

Specialization: *Methodology of Literature.*

Scientific Advisor: *V. A. Desnitski.*<sup>4</sup>

(Source 302, Op. 2, no. 51, page 2).

The data contained in this archival document provides us with information on relevant aspects of the political, historical and academic contexts in which the texts signed by Voloshinov were produced and published. Among the various aspects plausibly developed, we highlight two: the hegemony of Marxist theory and his Soviet acceptance in research methodology, and the area of specialization in the methodology of literature in which Voloshinov worked with Vassili Desnitski, who was his scientific-academic advisor.

Some of Voloshinov's answers on the form show how Marxism became an official theoretical-methodological approach, and mandatory for being hired and working in Soviet teaching and research institutions. This line of interpretation affords a reading, with reservations, of Voloshinov's categorical answers regarding his "opinion about Marxism as a scientific method", as being the only ones possible at the time. Various records found in the ILIAZV and the GIRK archives attest to the Marxist leanings

---

<sup>3</sup> Vassiliev (1995), from the documental research at the "The State Historical Archives of St. Petersburg" (GIA - *Gossudárstvennyi Istorístcheskii Arkhív Sankt-Petersburga*), reports that the only known fact about this period is that Voloshinov was in love with music and published his first musical compositions in the year he entered his law course.

<sup>4</sup> Original excerpt: "Otnochénie k marksizmu kak náitchnomu miétodu: *Stchítáiu egó edínstvenno príemlemym v metodologúitcheskom otnochénii.*

Kakíe marksístskie proizvedénia iztchali: *Krome samogó Marksa, tchital rabóty Plekhánova, Bukhárina i t. d.*

Partínost v nastoiáchee vriémia: *Bespartínnyi.*

Spetsiálnost: *Metodológia literatúry.*

Náitchnyi rukovodítel: *V. A. Desnitski.*"

in works produced by Voloshinov. In the first place, we observe the presence of Marxist works in the list of required readings, both general and specific, in the area of literature, as a condition for the selection into the Graduate program, enumerated in the Regulation Project of the Scientific Research Institutes and the Association of Institutes (29/01/1925):

1. General, for the entire Institute: *The communist manifesto* – Marx. *Capital*, t. 1. - Borchardt. *Capital/ exposition in 3 tomes/* -. Anti-Dühring.- Plekhanov. *Fundamental questions of Marxism.* - Plekhanov. *On the question of the development of monistic materialism.*- Bukharin. *Historical Materialism* – Lenin. *Imperialism as the newest stage of capitalism* – Lenin. *The State and revolution.*

2. For the Literature section: Plekhanov. *Articles on literature and art/* Collection, edition of the Institute K. Marx and F. Engels, t.t. 5,6,10,14/.- Mering. *World Literature and the proletariat.*- Vorovski. *Literary-critical Panorama.*- Nereverzev. *Dostoyevsky or Gogol.*- The resolution of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party on literature/*Press and Revolution*, 1925, N. 5-6; *Zvezda*, 1925, N. 4/.

For specialists in Russian Literature: Plekhanov. *The History of Russian Social Thought*, t.t. 1,2,2 and *Essays on literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century*, ed. Priboi, 1924. (Source 302, Op. 1, n. 223, page 6).<sup>5</sup>

This excerpt confirms that, already by the mid-1920s, Marxism had become a hegemonic approach in the area of human sciences, and one of the possible motivations for the explicit presence of soviet Marxist authors, and of his methodological proposals in the works of Voloshinov and Medvedev.

Voloshinov himself, as the periodical reports he presented at ILIAZV contest (Source 302. Op. no 51, page 12), highlights some of his pedagogical activities outside of the Institute. He conducted classes on Marxist theory, historical materialism, the history of material culture – some of which (for example, the history of material culture) were mandatory classes in the curriculum, every year throughout the entire course. At ILIAZV, Voloshinov and his scientific advisor, Vassili Desnitski, were among the

---

<sup>5</sup> Original excerpt: “1. Óbchaia dlia vsegó Instituta: Kommunistícheski Manifest. – Marx. Kapital, t.1. – Borchardt. Kapital/izlojénie vsek 3-kih tomov/ - Engels. Anti-During. – Plekhánov. K vopróssu o razvítii monítcheskogo materializma. - Bukhárin. Istóritcheski materializm. – Lénin. Imperializm, kak novéichii etap kapitalizma. – Lénin. Gossudárstvo i revoliútsia.

2. Dlía Otdeliénia Literatúry: Plekhánov. Statí po literatúre i iskústvú/Sotchiniénia, izd. In-ta – K. Marxa e F. Engelsa, t.t. 5, 6, 10, 14/. – Mering. Mirováia literatura i proletariat. – Voróvski. Literatúrno-kritítcheski ótcherk. – Perevírzev. Dostoievski ili Gógol. – Rezoliútsia TsKRKP o literatúre/Petchat i Revoliútsia, 1925 g., N. 5-6; Zvezdá, 1925 g., N. 4. Dlía spetsialístov po rússkói literatúre: Plekhánov. “Istória rússkoi obchéstvennoi mýsli, t.t. 1,2,3 i ótcherki po literatúre XIX víéka”, izd. “Priboi”, 1924.”

members of the laboratories and sectors that contained content specifically addressing Marxist theories, as follows:

1) Literature Laboratory from the era of Imperialism and the Proletariat Revolution (*Kabiniét literatúry epókhii imperiálizma i proletárskoii revoliútsii*) (Source 302, Op.275, p.10);

2) Methodology Laboratory (*Kabiniét metodológuui*) (1929-1930) in which, the focus of the work was on the development of a notebook with classic quotes from Marxist theory, among others (Source 302, Op. 1, no. 270, page 10) and various themes linked to Marxist theory in literature, as the following excerpt from *The Methodology of Literature, Research Plan Sector* (Out.-Dec. 1930) confirms:

The investigation of the problem raised by Plekhanov on literary studies and critical analysis based on Marxist methodology with regard to the main tendencies of Western European literary theory. In the next three months the following lectures are scheduled: E. Kislitsina «Plekhanov on Russian Literature», Berkovski «the Aesthetic of Hegel», Ioffe «The theory of free art», Azadovski «The school of Sauer», Voloshinov «Hirt and genre theory».

In addition to these, in the seminars we continue the development of the history of Marxist literary criticism supervised by V.A. Denistski. The development of the Plekhanovian theme based on the material from the Plekhanov House is also proposed.<sup>6</sup> (Source 302, op. 1, n. 271, page 1).

3) In the *Activity Plan of the Literature Sector of the State Institute of Cultural Linguistics* (GIRK, 1932 – Source 302, Op. 1, no. 56, page 73-75), Voloshinov's participation is evident in two laboratories, and in one group based on Marxist theory. The first of those is the Literary Process Laboratory (*Kabiniét literatúrnoho protsésa*), which, in fact, approaches literary genres from a Marxist perspective. The second is the Creative Method Laboratory (*Kabiniét tvórtcheskogo miétoda*), which aimed to develop a Marxist history of the system of poetics, among other things. The Antireligious Literature Group (*Grúppa antireligiúoznoi literatúry*) aimed to fight religion using literary texts.

Voloshinov's bibliographic production also attests to his participation in publications dedicated to Marxist theory. In 1928, an article was published, entitled, *The newest trends in linguistic thought of the West* (*Novéichie tetchéniiia lingvisticheskoi mysli na*

---

<sup>6</sup> Original excerpt: "Izutchiénié Plekhánovskoi problémy v literaturoviédénii i kriticheskii análiz na osnove marksistskoi metodológuui osnovnykh tetchiénii západno-evropéiskogo literaturoviédénia. V blijáichem kvartale namiétny doklady: E. Kislítsinoi "Plekhánov o rússkoi literatúre", Berkóvskogo "Estétika Hegelia", Ioffe "Teória svobódnogo iskústva", Azadóvskogo "Chkola Sauera", Volóchinova "Hirt i teoria jánrov".

Krome togo seminárskim putiém budet prodoljátsia razrabótka istórii marksistskoi literatúrnoi kritiki pod rukovódstvom V. A. Desnitskogo. Plekhánovskuiiu tiému predpolagáetsia razrabátivat takje i na osnóve materiálov Doma Plekhánova."

Západe) in the journal *Literature and Marxism (Literatura i marksizm)* dedicated to the theory and the history of literature. In the footnote of the first page of the article, the reader is informed that

This article is an expanded abstract of three chapters of the book by the author of *Marxism and the philosophy of language (fundamental problems of the sociological method in the sciences of language)*, which is being published by the Leningrad branch of the publishing company Gossizdat. (VOLOSHINOV, 1928, p. 115).<sup>7</sup>

The book mentioned in this citation was issued a year later, in 1929, by the publisher of Leningrad, Priboi. In 1930, Voloshinov published the article *On the borders of poetics and linguistics (O granítsakh poétiki i lingvístiki)*, in a book organized by his doctorate advisor, Vassili Desnitski, in which the need for a Marxist approach to literary studies is affirmed; the book was entitled *The Struggle for Marxism in Literary Science (V borbié za marksizm v literatúrnoi náuke)*, a volume that was part of the collection *Questions of methodology and the theory of language and literature (Vopróssy metodológuii i teórii iazyká i literatúry)*.

A second important element in Voloshinov's enrollment form is the definition of his area of specialization: literature methodology<sup>8</sup>. According to documents available in the archive, the Institute of Comparative History of Literatures and Languages of the West and the East was divided in two main areas: language and literature. All of Voloshinov's work records at the ILIAZV are contained in the area of literature, as follows:

1) In the activities report as a graduate student from 1925 to 1926 (Source 302, Op. 2, no. 51, page 9), work developed by Voloshinov was included in the Subsection on Literature Methodology. Among the works mentioned, there is the production of the well-known article, *The word in life and the word in poetry (Slóvo v jízni i slóvo v poézii)*, and a parenthetical explanation ensues, which deals with a summary, written by Voloshinov himself, from some chapters of the book *Essay on poetic sociology (Ópyt sotsiologuítcheskoi poétiki)*. Aside from mentioning the book in the report, all we know is that a work with this title was never published by the author<sup>9</sup>.

2) In the report on activities in the graduate program during 1928-1929 (Source 302, Op. 2, no. 51, page 12), Voloshinov informs that he performed services as the secretary of the Subsection of Literature Methodology, assisting his scientific advisor,

---

<sup>7</sup> Original excerpt: "Dánnaia statíá - avroreferat triokh glav knigi ávtora "Marksizm i filossófia iazyká" (Osnovnyie problémy sotsiologuítcheskogo miétoda v iazyke)", vykhodiáchei v Leningrádskom otdeliéniii Gosizdata."

<sup>8</sup> Alpatov (2005, p. 45) observed that "The lack of correspondence between his [Voloshinov] place in the structure of the Institute and the theme of his publications is striking", referring to, *Freudianism: a critical sketch* (1927) and *Marxism and the philosophy of language. Fundamental problems in the sociological method of the science of language* (1929), which are not works of the methodology of literature.

<sup>9</sup> Further on in the text, we transcribe the outline of the *Essay on Sociological Poetics* and present considerations about its relation to the later works both by Voloshinov himself, and Bakhtin and Medvedev.

Vassili Desnitski. In addition, Voloshinov, together with Desnitski, joined research groups about literature throughout the years he worked at the Institute: Literary Process group, Subsection of Literature Methodology and Theory (1928-1929).

Despite the fact that Voloshinov worked at the Subsection of Literature Methodology, it is important to note that ILIAZVA, referred to in 1930 by the State Institute of Cultural Linguistics (GIRK), was, according to a letter by Iakubinski, in 1933 (Source 302, op. 1, n. 97, page 3), the only institute in which language and literature were studied jointly. This general perspective of the Institute is an important element in the institutional context in which Voloshinov's and Medvedev's work are developed, the concepts and the research methodology of which are approached in an integrated way with regard to both language and literature.

Throughout the 1920s, the records from the Institute point to the inclusion and development of research addressing the domain of sociological poetics. If it is true that Voloshinov and Medvedev joined the majority of the research groups and lines of research in sociological poetics, we observed that this orientation transcended its execution. For example, addressing the goals of the literature sector in 1928 to 1929, collective themes appeared in which neither Voloshinov nor Medvedev are mentioned:

- 1) The sociology of genres in Modern Russian Literature, organized by Prof. Gorbatchov, and by the graduate student M. Maizel;
- 2) The morphology and sociology of literary genres and their development in the West, organized by Prof. V. Chichmariov and V. Jirmunski.

However, it is difficult to assess precisely how much sociological poetics contributed to Voloshinov's and Medvedev's work, since, on the one hand, the first records appearing with this theme, in the area of research conducted at the ILIAZV, are attributed to them. On the other hand, Voloshinov and Medvedev do not present the collective themes previously mentioned, in which the sociological method is also present.

### **Valentin Voloshinov's reports: translation, description and analysis**

In this section, we move on to a more detailed description of Voloshinov's work, mainly at the ILIAZV, and later with the GIRK. As mentioned, Valentin Nikolaevitch Voloshinov filled out the enrollment form for the ILIAZV at the end of 1924 (Source 302, opic 2, no. 51, page 1-2), and was accepted as a collaborating researcher in 1925 (*sverkhchétatnyi sotrudnik*). In the beginning of 1927 (Source 302, op. 2, no. 51, page 17), he was accepted as a doctoral student at the Institute under the supervision of Vassili Desnitski, his scientific-academic advisor. On October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1929, he defended his doctoral thesis (Source 302, op. 2, no. 51, page 18), and in 1930-31 he became a permanent professor-researcher (Source 302, op. 1, no. 56, page 71). His paper, *Marxism and the philosophy of language* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) is found in the literature section – *Project plan for publications in 1930-31* (Source 302, op. 1, no. 270, page 58). In 1931, we also find an entry in the *Plan of activities of the History of Western European Literatures in the*

*Era of Capitalism Group* (1931) where Voloshinov worked on the theme *The problem of genre* (Source 302, op. 1, no. 270, page 76).

Along with his work as a researcher and a doctoral student at the ILIAZV, there is, in the reports presented by Voloshinov (Source 302, op. 2, no. 51), information about his activities before and outside of the Institute:

1) From 1919-1922, he was a teacher/lecturer (*liéktor*) at the Professional School of the Local Department of Political Education (*Gubpolit-prosvet*) in Vitebsk;

2) From 1922 to 1923, he was a teacher/lecturer (*liéktor*) at the Railway Workers Union of Petrograd (*Dorprofsoj*);

3) From 1925-1928, he was a teacher at the Local Department of Political Education (*Gubpolitprosviet*);

4) From 1925, he taught at the State Technical, Industrial and Art School of Leningrad.

During this time, he wrote articles, reviews and even poems, as follows:

1) Poem (untitled). *Zápiski peredvijnogo teátra*, n. 37, p. 3, Petrograd, Nov. 6, 1922;

2) Sonnet and book review. E. M. Braudo. *Nietzsche. Philosopher-musician*. (Nietzsche. Filósof-muzykant), Ed. Atenci, 1922. *Zápiski peredvijnogo táatra*, n. 38, p. 3, Petrograd, Nov. 14, 1922;

3) Book review of Igor Gliébov *Pyotr Tchaikovsky. His Life and Work (Tchaikóvski. Jizn i tvórtchestvo)*. Petrograd, Ed. Mysl, 1922, 183 p. *Zápiski peredvijnogo teátra*, n. 42, p. 5, Petrograd, Dec. 12, 1922;

4) Book review of E. M. Braudo. *Aleksandr Porfírievitch Borodin. His Life and Work. (Aleksandr Porfírievitch Borodin. Ego jizn i tvórtchestvo)*. Petrograd, Ed. Mysl, 1922, 183 p. *Zápiski peredvijnogo teátra*, n. 43, p. 5, Petrograd, Dec. 19, 1922;

5) VOLOSHINOV. V. *The problem of the work of Beethoven. (Probléma tvórtchestva Bethóvena)*. *Zápiski peredvijnogo teátra*, n. 44, p. 2-3, Petrograd, Dec. 26, 1922.

6) VOLOSHINOV. V. *The problem of the work of Beethoven*. Final part. (*Probléma tvórtchestva Bethóvena*. Okontchánie). *Zápiski peredvijnogo teátra*, n. 44, p.3-4, Petrograd, Jan. 16, 1923.

7) Book review, Romain Rolland. *The musicians of our day. (Muzykanty nachikh dnei)*. Ed. "Mysl". *Zápiski peredvijnogo teátra*, n. 56, p. 8, Petrograd, May 8, 1923.

8) VOLOSHINOV. V. *On concert styles. (O kontsértnom stíle)*. *Zápiski peredvijnogo teátra*, n. 58, p. 1-2, Petrograd, June 5, 1923.

9) Book review, Prof. K. A. Kuznetsov. *Introduction to the history of music. Part I (Prof. K. A. Kuznetsov. Vvediénie v istóriiu múzyki. Tchast I.)* Gossizdat, 1923, 128 p, *Zápiski peredvijnogo teátra*, n. 67, p. 9, Petrograd, Dec. 20, 1923.

Voloshinov's bibliographic production before joining the ILIAZV attests to his work as a poet and a music critic. After joining the ILIAZV, Voloshinov presented regular reports in which he detailed his written and published works, the conferences he participated in and his work as a teacher/professor at various schools. These reports seem to suggest that there was constant control of and strict demands on the graduate students and researchers at the Institute. In the archives, six reports by Voloshinov were found. Their description follows.

### First report (1925-1926)

The first report recounts Voloshinov's activities in the years 1925/1926 and is organized in two major parts: the first is dedicated to scientific research, and the second to pedagogical work, both being interrelated from the methodological point of view, according to the author himself.

In the section dedicated to scientific research, the importance of the work already published, or what is reported as 'forthcoming' is highlighted, as follows:

- 1) The long article *The other side of the social (criticism of psychoanalysis from the point of view of dialectical materialism)*, published in the magazine *Zvezdá*, 1925, n. 5;
- 2) Another extensive work, *The Word in life and the word in poetry* (expanded abstract of the book *Essay on sociological poetics*, also in the magazine *Zvezdá*, 1926, n. 6;
- 3) The book *Freudianism: a critical sketch*, forthcoming from Lenotguíz<sup>10</sup>;
- 4) Preparation for the publication of the book, *Essay on the sociological poetics*.

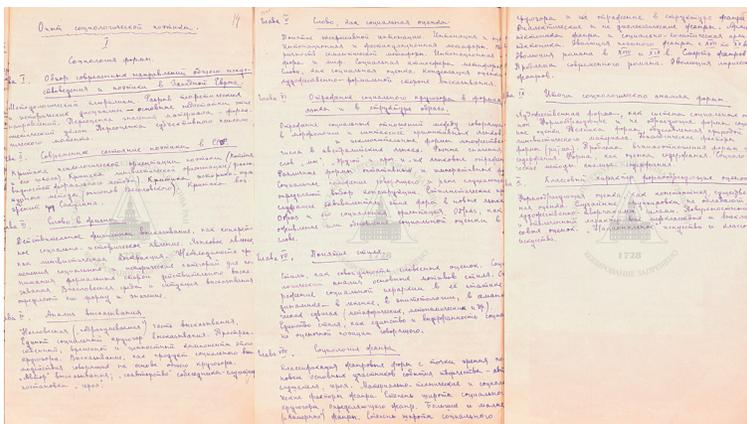
This relationship reveals a way of working in which, first came the publication of an extensive article in a journal, which was later expanded into a book on the same theme. This procedure garnered success in the case of the article, *The other side of the social*, which became the book *Freudianism: a critical sketch*. Meanwhile, the article *The word in life and the word in poetry: on questions of sociological poetics*, never materialized, despite there being an outline with the chapters and their contents in the material consulted at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences Archives (Sankt-Peterbúrgski Filial Arkhíva RAN) (Source 302, op. 2, no. 51, p. 14). In order to avoid overlooking any details, we would like to mention that the letter of this outline differs both from the letter that Voloshinov wrote himself, from what we observed in the personal material of the author, and of Bakhtin, according to what has

---

<sup>10</sup> With regard to Voloshinov's and other members of the Circle's interest in Freud's works, Vassíliev (1995, p. 10) wrote: "The Russian Intelligencia lived at that time the generalized fervor of Freudianism, which was reflected directly in the scientific interest of the Bakhtinian Circle." Among the members of the Circle who were interested in Freud, Vassíliev relates having Sollertinski teach a course on psychology in which special attention was dedicated to Freud's works, and having Pumpianski prepare the article, *A criticism of Rank and psychoanalysis*.

already been pointed out by Penakov (1995), regarding the outline of *Marxism and the philosophy of language*. The following is a copy of images from the manuscripts (Figure 2), and our transcription of the translation of the outline of *Essay on Sociological Poetics*:

**Figure 2** – Copy of the work plan “Essay on Sociological Poetics”



Source: Fond 302, op. 2, no. 51, pages 14-15.

## Essay on Sociological Poetics

### I

#### Sociology of form

#### Chapter I. Panorama of the current tendencies of the general theory of art and poetics in Western Europe

Methodological pluralism. The rupture between theory and history disciplines – the main defects of those tendencies. The reevaluation of the meaning of the material – The formalist trend. The reevaluation of the subjective psychological aspect.

Chapter II. The current state of poetics in the USSR. Criticism of the psychological perspective on poetry. (Potiebnia and his school). Criticism of the linguistic perspective (of the different types of formalist methods). Criticism of the historical-cultural method (from the followers of Vesselovski). Criticism from the positions of professor Sakulin.

#### Chapter III. Words in life

Real-life daily utterance as a concrete sociohistorical phenomenon. Linguistic phenomenon as an abstraction. The need for the application of social and historical categories for the comprehension of the formal aspects of real-life utterance. The extra-verbal means and the situation of an utterance determine its form and its meaning.

#### Chapter IV. Utterance analysis

The non-verbal part (“implied”) of the utterance. The social horizon of the utterance. The spatial, temporal and evaluative components of this horizon. Utterance as a product of the social interaction of speakers, based on the common horizon. The “author” of the utterance; the “coauthorship” of the listener-speaker; the presentation of the protagonist.

#### Chapter V. The word as social appraisal

The concept of expressive intonation. Intonation and appraisal. Intonational and gestural metaphors. The secondary character of semantic metaphor. The intonational metaphor and myth. The social sphere of the metaphor. Words as social appraisal. The condensation of appraisal in the formal artistic aspect of the utterance.

#### Chapter VI. The reflection of the social horizon in the form of language and the structure of the image.

The reflection of the social relationships between the speakers in the morphology and syntax of the primitive languages and the exceptional forms of the plural in Australian languages. The different meanings of the words “we”, “other”, etc. and their reflections in the language. The different optional forms<sup>11</sup> and imperatives. The social position of the speaker and the listener determine the choice of construction. The stylistic procedures that they equate to these forms in the new languages. The image as a revitalization or renovation of social appraisal in words.

#### Chapter VII. The concept of style

Style as a set of verbal evaluations. Sociological analysis of the fundamental motives for style. The reflection of the social hierarchy as static and dynamic – in the lexicon, in the epithetology, and semantic alterations (metaphoric, metonymic, etc.).

The unit of style as a unit, and the strength of the socioevaluative position of the speaker.

#### Chapter VIII. The sociology of genre

The classification of forms of genre from the point of view of the position of the main participants in the event of creation: of the author, the listener, the protagonist. The sociological and technical-material factors of genre. The reach of the social horizon that determines the genre. Major and minor genres (“of chamber”). The reach of the social horizon and its reflection in genre structure. Dialectical and non-dialectical genres.

---

<sup>11</sup> This refers to the predicate that expresses a desire or will, that is, seems to pertain to the subjunctive tense in Portuguese.

The sociopolitical architectonic, and the architectonic of the genre. The evolution of the poem as genre of the 17th to the 20th century. The evolution of the novel in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The death of the genres. The problem of the modern novel. The evolution of lyrical genres.

Chapter IX. The results of the sociological analysis of form

The artistic form as a system of social appraisal. Social appraisal shaped by and not shaped by the form. The technical form conditioned by the nature of the linguistic material. The biological factors of the form (rhythm). The problem of the interrelationship between the form and the content. The sociological methods of content analysis.

Chapter X. The character of the class of the appraisal formers of form.

The appraisal of form former as an essential constant appraisal. The occasional groupings that are not endowed with the artistic-creative forces. The superficial and abstract character of all the appraisals between classes and extra-classes. The “national” art and art of the classes. (Fond 302, op. 2, no. 51, pages 14-15).

This long outline demonstrates various aspects of Voloshinov’s intellectual production in consonance with other works produced by other authors of the Circle, especially Bakhtin and Medvedev. Primarily, we observe that the seven sections of the article, *The word in life and the word in art: On questions of sociological poetics* correspond to chapters III, IV, V, VI and VII in the outline above. Secondly, the fact that the outline of chapters I and II are very close to the beginning part of the book attributed to Medvedev, *The formal method of literary scholarship: a critical introduction to sociological poetics* (2012), seems to suggest a direct collaboration between the authors of the Circle. Next, some of the themes taken up in *Marxism and the philosophy of language*, appear in the outlines of Chapters III and X, with a special highlight on “The utterance as a product of the social interaction of speakers based on a common horizon”, which seems to be the embryo of the future central thesis of MPL, of which the “discursive interaction” and the “utterance” constitute a fundamental reality of human verbal language. Finally, we highlight the resemblances of themes related in the outline, to the themes of works published later and signed by Mikhail Bakhtin, as follows:

1) the paper on Dostoyevski, and the long study of the novel in 1930 that covers *The evolution of the novel in the 17th and 19th centuries. The death of genres. The Problem of the modern novel. The evolution of lyric genres*, as well as Chapter VII, *The concept of style*;

2) the essay *Genres of Discourse*, written by Bakhtin in 1950, are close to the topic found in the outline for chapter VIII, *The sociology of genre*. Besides the thematization

of the concept of “genre”, the presence of the term “architectonic”, which is recurrent in the texts signed by Bakhtin from the beginning of the 1920s, is worthy of note, and also that it is absent in texts published by Voloshinov.

This outline, in our view, is rich in material indications of the direct collaboration between, Bakhtin, Medvedev and Voloshinov in the second half of the 1920s, of which the three benefited in works published later on.

Within scientific research, Voloshinov reports having given two lectures: The construction of the theme of the Ode of Lomonossov<sup>12</sup>. Sociological analysis of the Appraisal System of the Russian Ode (*Tematicheskaia konstrúksia ódy Lomonóssova. Sotsiologúcheski análiz tsénnostnoi sistémy rússkogo odízma*) and Lienski<sup>13</sup> as a parody of sentimental romanticism (*Liénski kak paródia na sentimentálnyi romantizm*). These conference papers show two aspects of the author’s scientific work: primarily, we observe the methodological direction based on the sociological method that uses Appraisal System and parody as its object. It was a phenomenon that was frequently addressed in the works of the Circle in the 1920s; secondly, the analysis of classic Russian Literature in consonance with Voloshinov’s participation in the Literature Methodology Subsection, and with his work as professor of Russian Literature at the ILIAZV, and other institutions.

In the section dedicated to pedagogical work, Voloshinov reports that he taught History of Material Culture, Historical Materialism and the History of Literature at the State Technical, Industrial and Art School, an important institution of higher education in St. Petersburg, from which various leading Russian artists graduated. In addition to this regular work, Voloshinov delivered lectures, combined with piano concerts, on the history of culture, the sociology of music and the history of literature for the Local Committee of Education that carried out educational work at workers associations.

Voloshinov closed the report, highlighting an excess of teaching work that impeded him from furthering his scientific research on the sociology of art (verbal, musical and visual). Due to this overload, he solicits government support to be able to dedicate himself more fully to his main vocation: scientific research. He had planned to publish an extensive work on the theme, of which he had already finished the first part – the previously mentioned text, *Essay on sociological poetics*, with the chapters and their main themes found in Voloshinov’s folder of personal documents. With respect to this work, two questions remain unanswered: was the *Essay on sociological poetics* a book that was never published? Did the author transform this work into *Marxism and the philosophy of language*, in which we find mention of the various ideological signs (musical, verbal, visual, etc.)?

---

<sup>12</sup> Mikhail Lomonossov (1711-1765), eminent Russian encyclopedic scientist, founder of various scientific domains, (physics, chemistry, astronomy, geography, grammar, etc.), pioneer of the creation of a Russian poetic language and author of various odes.

<sup>13</sup> Vladimir Lienski is one of the main characters of the novel in verse, by Alexander Pushkin, (1799-1837) *Eugene Onegin* (published in serial form from 1823 to 1831).

## Second report (1926-1927)

The following report, corresponding to the academic year 1926-1927<sup>14</sup>, is not found in Voloshinov's personal folder, consulted at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences Archives (Sankt-Peterbúrgski Filial Arkhiva RAN), but is published by Pankov (1995, p. 76-77) in the journal *Dialogue. Carnival. Chronotope*. The report is divided into two main parts: scientific research and scientific practice. In the first, Voloshinov cites the following works:

- 1) He mentions again, *The word in life and the word in poetry*, and the book *Freudianism (a critical sketch)*, which includes an indication of the publisher (Lenotguiz) and the year of publication (1927);
- 2) The lecture *The poetic structure as a sociological structure (Poeticheskaia struktúra kak struktúra sotsiologúicheskaia)* scheduled for June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1927 at the ILIAZ;
- 3) The preparation of the book *Introduction to a sociological poetics* with an indication that it was slated for publication.

At the end of this part, Voloshinov adds that he read and analyzed a series of works on Marxism for his doctoral exam.

The second part – scientific practice – is divided as follows:

- 1) Activities as a lecturer: lectures on the history of musical culture and on the history of literature, delivered at clubs, hospitals, etc.
- 2) Pedagogical activities: taught classes in historical materialism and the history of literature at the State Technical, Industrial and Art School.

At the end of the report the approval of the examiner, Gorbatchov, is found, which spotlights the innovative and complex character of his questions of methodology and theory of literature, pointing out “[...] Voloshinov's significant success and very satisfactory work in the period reported.” (PANKOV, 1995, p. 77).

Voloshinov's second report allows us to accompany the evolution of his work, still as a collaborating researcher (*sverkhchtátnyi sotrudnik*) at the ILIAZV, of which we mention three salient aspects. Firstly, we observe that the article *The other side of the social* – following this sequence from article to book – had been transformed into the book *Freudianism: a critical sketch*, through publication. Secondly, our research found an alteration in the title of the outline for the book *Essay on sociological poetics*, which became *A Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics*. This resemblance allows us (once again) to deduce that there was a direct collaboration between Voloshinov, Medvedev and Bakhtin in the 1920s. Finally, Voloshinov reports his preparations for the entrance exam in the doctorate program through readings of Marxist works that, as previously described, are found in the list of required readings for enrollment in the ILIAZ.

---

<sup>14</sup> In Russia, the school year begins in September and ends in June of the following year.

### Third report (1927-1928)

The third report<sup>15</sup> covers the period from January 1927 to May 1928, when Voloshinov appears, for the first time, as a doctoral student at the ILIAZV, a statute that allows him to earn a scholarship for studies and, consequently, dedicate himself more fully to his research, his manifest desire expressed from the first report, when he was still only a collaborating researcher, with no formal link to the institution. The report is divided into four parts, and is accompanied by two manuscripts and the comments by his advisor, Vassili Desnitski:

1) Presentation of the two texts already published: the book *Freudianism (a critical sketch)* (*Freidizm (kritičeski ótcherk)*) (VOLOCHINOV, 1927), accompanied by the following description, “a sketch of the application of Marxist analysis on the work of Sigmund Freud and his school” (PANKOV, 1995, p. 77), and the article *The problem of the transmission of random discourse (sociolinguistic essay research)* (*Probléma peredátschi tchujói riétchi (ópyt sotstiolingvističeskogo isslédovania)*), accompanied by a detailed description of its chapters and contents, which Voloshinov affirms had already been accepted for publication in the collection, *Against Idealism in linguistics (Prótiv idealízma v iazykoznánii)*.<sup>16</sup>

Next, he presents four chapters of a book already cited in previous reports, *An Introduction to Sociological Poetics*: “Chapter I – Sociological structure of basic daily utterances; Chapter II – Sociological structure of “lived experience” and “expression”; Chapter III – Sociological structure of poetic form; Chapter IV – The sociological genre” (PANKOV, 1995, p. 77-78). The third chapter was presented as a lecture at the meeting of the Literature Methodology Subsection at the ILIAZV on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February of the corresponding year (PANKOV, 1995, p. 77-78). In the final report, Pankov presents a fragment of the minutes of this meeting, in which Vassili Desnitski, Voloshinov’s scientific advisor, comments on the presentation of his advisee: “[...] the lecture by comrade Voloshinov is extremely interesting; the spirit of our Marxist searches hovers over the entire work, and we hope that in the future the lecturer will present us with his work in an even more complete way.” (PANKOV, 1995, p. 78).

Still in this first part, Voloshinov mentions the expanded abstract (*avtoreferát*) of the book *Marxism and the philosophy of language (fundamentals of the sociological method in the science of language)* (*Marksizm i filossófia iazyká (osnový sotsiolingvističeskogo miétoda v náuke o iazykié)*), which is accompanied by a detailed

---

<sup>15</sup> This is also missing from Voloshinov’s personal folder, consulted at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences Archives (Sankt-Peterbúrgski Filial Arkhiva RAN), but it is found published by Pankov (1995, p. 77-78) in the journal *Dialogue. Carnival. Chronotope*.

<sup>16</sup> Alpatov (2005, p. 84) makes two pertinent commentaries with respect to this article: firstly, he observes that, despite the publication being approved, the collection, for some reason, never materialized and “it is possible to suppose that, when the publication of the collection did not happen, Voloshinov decided to add the article that was already finished, to the book as the third part”; secondly, Alpatov observes that the term “sociolinguistics” was not preserved in *Marxism and the philosophy of language*, as, it was only from the 1960s on that it came to be widely used in the Soviet Union.

outline of its parts, chapters and contents. The author states that it was a work in the publishing preparation phase, and had already been accepted by the publisher GIZ in May of 1928.

2) In addition, a scientific bibliography in French and German, mainly on questions of poetics and the philosophy of language.

3) Professional activities, from 1925, as professor of literary history and material culture at the State Technical, Artistic, Industrial School, together with the Academy of Arts.

4) Up to January, 1928, the period in which he earns a scholarship, delivers lectures on historical-literary and historical-musical themes at three State institutions of scientific popularization: : Gubpolitprosviét (Departamento da Educação Política da Província), Gubprofsoviét (Departamento dos Conselhos Profissionais da Província) e Domprosviét (Casa da Educação).

Voloshinov closes the report with a mention of his work as a member of the board of directors within the greater area of literature, and as the secretary of the Literature Methodology Subsection.

This report offers some pertinent elements that contribute to understanding Voloshinov's academic trajectories at the ILIAZV, and his process of scientific production. On the one hand, the book *Introduction to sociological poetics*, appearing in the first report and throughout others, was never published, and some of its contents were addressed in Medvedev's book – *The Sociological Structure of Poetic Form* – and even in *Marxism and the philosophy of language* (Sociological structure of basic daily utterances, Sociological structure of “lived experience” and “expression”). It is worthy to note that, the fact that the themes proposed by Voloshinov in the outline of the book *Introduction to a sociological poetics* are also addressed by Medvedev in the book, *Formal methods. Critical Introduction to sociological poetics*, which seems to point to, according to what we have already commented on the previous report, a dialogue and a theme common among the authors. On the other hand, he mentions, for the first time that the texts *The problem of the transmission of random discourse* and *Marxism and the philosophy of language* were accepted for publication, but will become a single work, published at the end of 1929. One hypothesis for the accelerated production of these works is the fact that Voloshinov had a scholarship from the ILIAZV during the exact period of this report, which allowed him to dedicate more time to research activities.

We would like to mention his advisor, Vassili Desnitski's evaluation, as well, with respect to the lecture Voloshinov delivered – *The sociological structure of the poetic form*. Desnitski lauds the quality of the work and its importance in Marxist studies developed at the ILIAZV, which highlight the academic context of Voloshinov's intellectual production, in which Marxism is a hegemonic theoretical-methodological orientation.

## Fourth report (1928-1929)

This report is divided into 5 parts in which the following activities are addressed:

1) Scientific work at the ILIAZV carried out at the Literature Methodology Subsection, which resulted in the publication of the book *Marxism and the philosophy of language*, in 1929, as part of the collection *Questions of methodology and theory of language and literature (Vopróssy metodológuui e teórii iazyká i literatúry)* (ILIAZV-Pribói);

2) Scientific work outside of ILIAZV through the publication of the article *The newest trends in linguistic thought of the West (Noviéchie tetchiènia lingvisticheskoj mysli na Západe)* in the journal *Literature and Marxism* (1928, book 5) and the collaboration in the collection, *Rabfák na domú*, published by GIZ, sections of Literature and the Theory of Literary Discourse;

3) Work with foreign languages through the preparation of two translations: the article by K. Bühler *Vom Esen des Syntax*, and two sections of the book by E. Cassirer *Philosophie des symbolischen Formen*;

4) Practical pedagogical work at the *State Technical, Industrial and Art School of Leningrad*, at which he taught the classes – the History of Material Culture and the History of Russian Literature;

5) Social work: as a member of the cultural commission, carrying out activities of cultural education at the *State Technical, Industrial and Art School of Leningrad*, such as lectures, interviews and literary-musical gatherings.

Voloshinov closes the report identifying himself as a doctoral student and the secretary of the Literature Methodology Subsection.

In this report, we find out that the book *Marxism and the philosophy of language* has already been published, as well as the article “The newest trends in linguistic thought in the West”. On consulting and photocopying this article in the Library of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, we discovered that, according to a footnote by the same author, the work is an expanded summary of the three chapters of the book *Marxism and the philosophy of language*, repeating, however, the procedure already observed, for example, in the article “The other side of the social” (1925), which became the book *Freudianism: a critical sketch* (1927).

If in this previous report, we find mention of the addition of a bibliography on poetics and philosophy of language in French and German, now for the first time, Voloshinov reports completing the translation of two texts in German by authors cited in *Marxism and philosophy*, and in articles.

Finally, we would like to point out that Voloshinov’s pedagogical activities concentrate on the areas of literature and material culture. In this domain, he collaborates on the project *Worker Education at Home (Rabfák na domú)* from the publisher GIZ, in the literature and theory of literary language section, which produced self-study didactic material for workers who wanted to obtain a degree in higher

education, but who, because of their work hours, could not attend university classes, or for those who simply wanted to broaden their knowledge. In addition, Voloshinov maintained his social activities of disseminating knowledge in the areas of literature, culture and music. It is clear, then, that Voloshinov continued to be involved in not only academic research, but also in the socialization of this knowledge to workers and non-specialists.

### **Voloshinov's doctoral thesis defense and performance evaluation**

The information with respect to Voloshinov's doctoral defense is contradictory and filled with gaps. On the one hand, we find a document signed by Nikolai Derjavin, the director of ILIAZV, in the author's personal folder, which mentions Voloshinov's defense of his doctoral dissertation, on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1929 (Source 302, op. 2, no. 51, page 18). On the other hand, we did not find any mention to the title of the dissertation, nor a report of the defense with the evaluation of the examining panel. Vassiliev (1995) writes that the theme of Voloshinov's dissertation was "probably" the transmission of random discourse and its relationship to linguistics and poetics, but does not provide the exact title of the work, nor any other concrete details.

In the bibliography, with respect to Valentin Voloshinov's trajectory, we also find contradictory information. On the one hand, in Valentin Voloshinov's biography, N.L.Vassiliev writes that "Voloshinov worked during this period on a dissertation with the theme that coincided with the theme of this chapter, that is, free indirect discourse" (VASSÍLIEV, 2003, p. 74), referring to the fourth chapter of the third part of MPL. The same information appears in the chronology of the Bakhtin Circle, prepared by Brandist, Shepherd and Tihanov (2004). On the other hand, Alpatov (2012, p. 181), an eminent Russian historian of linguistics and a scholar of the work of the Bakhtin Circle, affirms that between 1925 and 1930, the period of time when Voloshinov was a member of ILIAZV, "[...] the system of dissertations was abolished, however, the doctoral students should, periodically, report on the activities they have carried out." This leads to the assumption that, for this reason, Voloshinov would have obtained the title of Doctor (in Russian, *kandidat naúk*) without actually defending his dissertation.

In this same period, a request addressed to the Russian Academy of Sciences, recommends Voloshinov's acceptance into the graduate program. In the following, we transcribe this document (Figure 3) as it contains a description of Voloshinov's academic qualities:



We do not know the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union's response, or if Voloshinov managed to continue his studies there. However, it is clear that he desired to pursue his research and obtain the further degrees in his scientific/academic career. Voloshinov's academic performance is extremely lauded by the ILIAZV directors: "being one of the most capable graduates". According to the ILIAZV Board of directors, his research is exceptional in that it links two of the main lines of scientific activity – linguistic and literary – as well as demonstrating mature reflection from a Marxist theoretical-methodological perspective. Finally, his active participation in the administration and organization of the activities at the Literature Methodology Subsection is also featured in the resolution.

## Fifth report

For the first time, Voloshinov appears as a first level professor-researcher at the institute currently known as the Institute of Linguistic Culture (*Gossudarstvennyi Institut Retchevói Kultúry* - GIRK). The report is organized in two main parts: works carried out at the ILIAZV, and works conducted outside of it. At the ILIAZV, he reports:

1) Scientific organization in which he describes his work as the Cabinet secretary (*kabiniét*)<sup>17</sup> of the Literature Methodology Subsection; presiding over 7 meetings of the Cabinet and the sociological poetics group. He was the secretary for 10 meetings of the Cabinet council and plenary. He prepared the outline for the collection of translations, *Questions of theory and methodology of the languages and literatures in the West* (*Vopróssy teórii i metodológuii iazyká i literatúry na Západe*). Voloshinov finalizes the account with the following declaration: "From the 13<sup>th</sup> of February of the current year, I worked at a ravaging pace due to the fact that the Cabinet of the Literature Methodology Subsection has been declared a shock brigade of the Marxist theorists of literature."<sup>18</sup>

2) Scientific research: the publication of the article *On the borders of poetics and linguistics* (*O granítsakh poétiki i lingvístiki*), a collection; and *The struggle for Marxism in literary Science* (*V borbié za marksíz m v literatúrnoi náuke*)<sup>19</sup>, which was presented as a lecture in a meeting of the sociological poetics group.

3) Scientific popularization: publication of a series of articles for the journal *Literary Studies* (*Literatúrnaia utchióba*) under the general title, "Stylistics in Literary Discourse" (*Stilístika khudójestvennoi riétchi*), as follows: *What is language?* (*Tchto*

---

<sup>17</sup> In the earlier reports, Voloshinov used the word "subsection" to refer to the research unit in the methodology of literature.

<sup>18</sup> Original excerpt: "S 13-ogo fevralia s.g. prechiol na udárniu rabótu v sviazí s obiavléníem kabiniéta metodológuii literatúry udárnoi brigádoi literaturoviédov-marksistov."

<sup>19</sup> This collection was published in *Questions of methodology and the theory of language and literature* (*Vopróssy teórii i metodológuii iazyká i literatúry*) by the publisher, Priboi, Leningrad, in 1930. It includes works produced by researchers at the ILIAZV.

takóie iazyk?)<sup>20</sup>, *The construction of daily utterance (Konstrúksia jízennogo vyskázývania)*<sup>21</sup>, *The word and its social function (Slovo i ego sotsiálnaia fúnktsia)*<sup>22</sup> and *Genre and style of literary utterance (Slóvo i ego sotsiálnaia fúnktsia)*<sup>23</sup>.

On his work outside of the ILIAZV, Voloshinov relates the following activities:

1) Leading the seminar on methodology of literature for professors in the Volodarski district where he delivered lectures on the Sociological Structure of “lived experience” and “expression”, (*Sotsiologúicheskaia struktúra “pereživánia” I’vyrajénia*) and *Essay on the sociology of the genre (Ópyt sotsiológuii janra)*;

2) Taught classes in Russian language and literature in the *State Technical, Industrial and Art school of Leningrad*, where he presided over the Cultural Commission, organizing lectures, workshops, etc.

This report distinguishes itself from the others for its emphasis on reporting works of scientific management in the first place, as well as the presence of propaganda terms from the Soviet Union (“shock brigade”, “ravaging pace”). Next, we highlight the activities he carried out to popularize science – a term employed for the first time – resulting in the production of the four texts. Despite Voloshinov’s mention of the 4 articles, we know that just 3 were effectively published in the periodical, *Literary Studies (Literatúrnaia utchióba)*, which displays on the front page the information that it is a *Journal for self-education studies (Jurnál dliá samoobrazovániia)*. The change of the name of the Institute, and the fact that the scientific studies gave way to administrative activities in Voloshinov’s report, does not only mean formal alterations, but also broader changes in the organization of soviet scientific institutions at the time. On introducing a lecture on Olga Friedenberg, who was member of the ILIAZV at the same time as Voloshinov, Nina Braguinskaia comments on this reorganization:

In the summer of 1930, the Popular Commissary of Education renamed ILIAZV, State Institute of Cultural Linguistics. This name change was not only formal, but with it there was also a quantitative and qualitative change in the composition of the Institute: it was significantly reduced; renowned scientists and long-time academics were fired or resigned [...] and the graduates took their place, members of the Komsomol<sup>24</sup> and the Party, selected for party loyalty. [...] In the place of “abstract activities”, a soviet scientific institution emerged. (BRAGUINSKAIA, 1995, p.247).<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Volóchinov (1930a).

<sup>21</sup> Volóchinov (1930b).

<sup>22</sup> Volóchinov (1930c).

<sup>23</sup> In preparation for publication.

<sup>24</sup> Abbreviation of the “Communist Youth Union”.

<sup>25</sup> Itak, letom 1930 g. Narkomat Prosveschenia pereimenoval ILIAZV v Gosudárstvennyi institut retchevói kultúry. Pereimenovánie ne bylo formalnym, za nim stoiálo izmeniénie i sostava instituta, kolíchestvenno i kátchestvenno -

Therefore, the second to the last report by Voloshinov, as well as the others, is a concrete utterance, which is constituted and understood in direct relation to the immediate social situation and the broader ideological horizon. The authoritarian word (“shock brigade”) invades Voloshinov’s utterance, which must be submitted to the first Five-year plan (1928-1932) imposed by the Stalinist regime, and its economic goals in all areas of Soviet society.

## Sixth Report (1931)

Voloshinov continues here as a professor-researcher, however, unlike the previous reports, this one comprises only the first three months of 1931, and is divided in two parts: scientific research and administrative activities.

1) Scientific research work : preparation for publication of the first part of a book called, *Introduction to the dialectic of the word (Vvedienie v dialiektiku slova)*; lecture, *Genre and style of literary utterance (Janr i stil khudojesvennogo vyskazyvania)* delivered at the Cabinet of Literature Methodology Subsection; active participation in all of the meetings of the Cabinet on the Methodology of Russian Literature; periodic attendance at the General Linguistics Cabinet;

2) Administrative work: substituted the head of the Literature Methodology Cabinet, where he presided over a series of meetings.

We highlight here the reduction of the period covered by the report, probably as a consequence of the administrative reorganization of the Institute, previously mentioned, revealing a reduction in the quantity of related activities. The book mentioned seems to never have been published, since Voloshinov’s last effective publications are the articles in the journal *Literary Studies*, mentioned in the former report. For the first time, Voloshinov reports that he attended the Cabinet meetings of General Linguistics, an area closer to the publication of *Marxism and the philosophy of language*. The administrative activities show that he left his post as secretary and became the Vice-director of the Cabinets of Literary Process and the Creative Method, as well as the Antireligious Literature group, thus it seems he was able to obtain a kind of promotion in his institutional position.

The final register of Voloshinov’s work at the Institute occurs in the *Production plan for the literature sector of the State Institute of Cultural Linguistics for the year 1932*, in which he appears as a participant in the Literary Process and Creative Methods Cabinets, as well as the Antireligious Literature group. Despite this, it is Voloshinov’s last continuous report in the St. Petersburg Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences Archives (*Sankt-Peterbúrgski Filial Arkhiva RAN*).

---

on sokratilsia v niekoľko raz, iz nego byli udalený i uchlí sami krúpnyie utchiónyie e stáryie akadímiki [...] i prichlí “aspiránty”, sotsiálno orfiltróvannyie komsomóltsy i partiítsy. [...] Vmesto vsekh étikh “otórvannykh ot jízni” zaniátiií voznikáiet soviétskoie náučnoie uchrejdiénie.

According to Vassiliev (1995), Voloshinov – after the reformulation of the GIRK in 1932, when the literature sector was eliminated, and the linguistics sector became the basis for the Linguistic Institute of Leningrad – he gave classes at the Pedagogical Institute A. I. Guerstsen and at the Institute for the Advancement of the Art Workers up to 1934, when he had to stop due to severe tuberculosis, from which he died, on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1936.

## Discoveries of the Archival research

These reports on Voloshinov are concrete utterances reflecting and refracting the immediate situation of communication and the broader ideological horizon. It is impossible to analyze them and understand them without considering the transformations that occurred in the Soviet Union and their repercussion on the ILIAZV, which, from 1928 on, had to adapt to Stalin's new economic guidelines, called the Five-year Plan, aiming to transform USSR from an agricultural country to an industrial one. As a result of this Plan, even the scientific institutions in the area of human sciences suffered deep reorganizations and had to develop goals to be met. We can clearly see the influence of these political-economic macrocontexts in Voloshinov's reports.

The material found in the archives allows us, on the one hand, to provide concrete and precise information on some of the aspects of Voloshinov's academic and even personal trajectory in the context of his work at the ILIAZV and afterward at GIRK:

1) Before his admittance to the ILIAZV, Valentin Voloshinov was a musician, and composer, as well as an artist producing poems, reviews and short articles about music. Vassiliev (1995) reports that, while still at Vitesbsk, Voloshinov gave up on being a poet, recognizing that he did not have any special talent for it, preferring to maintain his musical activities as a composer and music critic;

2) Already by the mid 1920s, Marxist theory had become hegemonic and is found in the required readings for entrance into the ILIAZV, which can explain the presence of Marxist theory in Valentin Voloshinov's work;

3) Valentin Voloshinov's reports evidence of a recurrent work style in which he would mainly publish an extensive article in a journal, and then later expand it into a book on the same theme;

4) The general outline for the work, *Introduction to sociological poetics* comprised in the 1<sup>st</sup> report (1925-26) reveals that the content of the chapters included themes addressed later by Mikhail Bakhtin and Pavel Medvedev, indicating a direct academic collaboration between the authors between 1925 and 1929, when the three met up in Leningrad;

5) Valentin Voloshinov worked intensely in the Literature Methodology Subsection, both in administrative activities and scientific, despite the fact that two of his best known works in Brazil – *Freudianism: a critical sketch* (1927) and *Marxism and the philosophy of language. Critical introductions to sociological poetics*

(1929) – treat themes closer to the fields of study of the philosophy of language and linguistics. In this respect, it is worthy to note that, according to Iakubinski's 1933 letter (Source 302, op. 1, n. 97, page 3), the ILIAZV was the only research institute in the Soviet Union at the time, where research was carried out in both literature and linguistics. Consequently, the imprecise limits between the theory of literature and the theory of linguistics, and the resulting richness of works by Valentin Voloshinov, Pavel Medvedev and even Mikhail Bakhtin, lead us to surmise they may have benefited by this academic context;

6) In more than one document of the ILIAZV, commentaries that shower praises regarding Valentin Voloshinov's scientific production attest to his personal talent in producing the works that were attributed to him.

Nonetheless, on the other hand, we observe gaps, unresolvable so far, about those same themes: what could have happened with the book *Introduction to Sociological Poetics* cited in the first three reports?<sup>26</sup> Why was the book *Marxism and the philosophy of language* released in January of 1929, according to Alpatov's research (2005, p.91), and why did the defense of his dissertation occur in October of 1929, according to documents found in the archives? Why weren't Voloshinov's doctoral dissertation theme and the record of his defense found in the archives? What was the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union's response to the board of directors' recommendation to accept Voloshinov in to the ILIAZV as a graduate student?

If we were in the domain of aesthetic activity, as Bakhtin theorized (1993), the architectonics of the author would have found a way to give an ending and conclusion to these gaps. However, in the sphere of scientific activity, we have to content ourselves with a reporting of the records found, preserving both their concreteness and their unfinished quality, their inconclusiveness and their incompleteness.

GRILLO, S.; AMÉRICO, E. Valentin Nikoláievitch Volóchinov: detalhes da vida e da obra encontrados em arquivos. *Alfa*, São Paulo, v.61, n.2, p.339-366, 2017.

- **RESUMO:** Neste artigo relatamos e descrevemos as descobertas de nossa pesquisa realizada nos arquivos da Filial de São Petersburgo do Arquivo da Academia Russa de Ciências, onde foram consultadas os documentos do Instituto da História Comparada das Literaturas e Línguas do Ocidente e Oriente (ILIAZV), lugar de atuação de Valentin Nikoláievitch Volóchinov entre 1925 e 1932. A pesquisa documental permitiu o conhecimento da trajetória acadêmica e mesmo pessoal desse autor; na época em que produziu, entre outras, a obra *Marxismo e filosofia da linguagem. Problemas fundamentais do método sociológico na ciência da linguagem. Entre os principais achados da consulta ao arquivo destacamos: a forte presença da teoria marxista em diversas atividades do ILIAZV, a participação de Volóchinov nessas atividades, a atuação de Volóchinov na seção de metodologia da literatura, a presença de temas*

---

<sup>26</sup> Alpatov (2005, p. 93) also states that the destiny of this book is a mystery.

*de trabalhos de Medviédev e de Bakhtin em planos dos relatórios de Volóchinov entregues ao ILIAZV, o reconhecimento dos méritos acadêmicos de Volóchinov por pesquisadores do ILIAZV, a metodologia de trabalho de Volóchinov, as mudanças nas instituições acadêmicas soviéticas entre 1925 e 1932.*

- **PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Volóchinov. Círculo de Bakhtin. Arquivos do ILIAZV.*

## REFERENCES

ALPÁTOV, V. M. **Iazykoviédy, vostokoviédy, istóriki**. Moscou: Iazykí Slaviánskikh Kultur, 2012.

ALPÁTOV, V. M. **Volóchinov, Bakhtin i lingvístika**. Moscou: Iazykí Slaviánskikh Kultur, 2005.

BAKHTIN, M. M. **Questões de literatura e de estética: a teoria do romance**. Tradução de Aurora F. Bernardini et al. 3. ed. São Paulo: Hucitec: Ed.UNESP, 1993.

BRAGUÍNSKAIA, N. Siste, Viator! Predislóvie k dokládu O. M. Freidenberg “O nepodvíjnykh siujetakh i brodiátchikh teoriétikakh”. **Odissei: tcheloviék v istórii**. Moscou: Naúka, 1995. p. 244-271.

BRANDIST, C.; SHEPHERD, D.; TIHANOV, G. **The Bakhtin circle: in the master’s absence**. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.

BAKHTIN, M. M. **Bakhtin pod máskoi**. [Organização e preparação de I. V. Pechkov e comentários de I. V. Pechkov e V. L. Mákhlin]. Moscou: Labirínt, 2000.

INSTITUTO DA HISTÓRIA COMPARADA DAS LITERATURAS E LÍNGUAS DO OCIDENTE E DO ORIENTE [ILIAZV]. Filial ARAN, São Petersburgo, Fundo 302, op. 1, n.275.

INSTITUTO DA HISTÓRIA COMPARADA DAS LITERATURAS E LÍNGUAS DO OCIDENTE E DO ORIENTE [ILIAZV]. Filial ARAN, São Petersburgo, Fundo 302, op. 1, n.271.

INSTITUTO DA HISTÓRIA COMPARADA DAS LITERATURAS E LÍNGUAS DO OCIDENTE E DO ORIENTE [ILIAZV]. Filial ARAN, São Petersburgo, Fundo 302, op. 1, n.270.

INSTITUTO DA HISTÓRIA COMPARADA DAS LITERATURAS E LÍNGUAS DO OCIDENTE E DO ORIENTE [ILIAZV]. Filial ARAN, São Petersburgo, Fundo 302, op. 1, n.223.

INSTITUTO DA HISTÓRIA COMPARADA DAS LITERATURAS E LÍNGUAS DO OCIDENTE E DO ORIENTE [ILIAZV]. Filial ARAN, São Petersburgo, Fundo 302, op. 1, n.97.

INSTITUTO DA HISTÓRIA COMPARADA DAS LITERATURAS E LÍNGUAS DO OCIDENTE E DO ORIENTE [ILIAZV]. Filial ARAN, São Petersburgo, Fundo 302, op. 1, n.56.

INSTITUTO DA HISTÓRIA COMPARADA DAS LITERATURAS E LÍNGUAS DO OCIDENTE E DO ORIENTE [ILIAZV]. Filial ARAN, São Petersburgo, Fundo 302, op. 2, n.51.

IVÁNOV, V. V. Ob ávtorstve knig V. N. Volóchinova i P. N. Medviédeva. **Dialog, karnaval, khronotop**, Moscou, n. 4, p. 134-139, 1995. Disponível em: <<http://nevmenandr.net/dkx>>. Acesso em: 12 nov. 2011.

IVÁNOV, V. V. Znatchiénie idei M. M. Bakhtiná o znáke, vyskázývanii i dialogue dliá sovremiénoi semiótki. In: IVÁNOV, V. V. **Ízbrannye trudý po semiótkie i istorii kultúry**, tom VI. Moscou: Znak: 2009. p. 183-217.

MEDVIÉDEV, P. N. **O método formal nos estudos literários**. Introdução crítica a uma poética sociológica. Tradução de Ekaterina V. Américo e Sheila C. Grillo. São Paulo: Contexto, 2012.

PANKÓV, N. A. Mifologuema Volóchinova (nieskolko zametchánii kak by na póliakh arkhívnykh materiálov). **Dialog, Karnaval, Khronotop**, Vítebsk, v. 2, p. 66-69, 1995.

VASSÍLIEV, N. L. Istória vopróssa ob ávtorstve “spórnykh tiéktsov”, pripíssyvaiemykh M. M. Bakhtinu. **Integrátsia Obrazovánia**, [S.l.], n. 3, p. 68-97, 2003.

VASSÍLIEV, N. L. V. N. Volóchinov: biografítchekii ótcherk. In: VOLÓCHINOV, V. N. **Filosófiiia i sotsiológuia gumanitárnykh nauk**. São Petersburgo: Asta Press, 1995. p. 5-22.

VOLÓCHINOV, V. N. Líchnoe delo. **Dialog, Karnaval, Khronotop**, Vítebsk, n.2, p. 70-99, 1995a.

VOLÓCHINOV, V. N. **Filosófiiia i sotsiológuia gumanitárnykh naúk**. São Petersburgo: Asta Press, 1995b.

VOLÓCHINOV, V. H. Tchto takóie iazyk? **Literatúrnaia Utchióba**, [S.l.], n. 2, p. 48-66, 1930a.

VOLÓCHINOV, V. H. Konstrúksia jízennogo vyskázývania. **Literatúrnaia Utchióba**, [S.l.], n. 3, p. 65-87, 1930b.

VOLÓCHINOV, V. H. Slovo i ego sotsiálnaia fúnksia. **Literatúrnaia Utchióba**, [S.l.], n.5, p. 43-59, 1930c.

VOLÓCHINOV, V. H. O granítsakh poétiki i lingvístiki. In: DESNÍTSKI, V. V **borbié za marksizm v literatúrnoi naúke**. Leningrado: Priboi, 1930d. p. 203-240.

VOLÓCHINOV, V. H. Novéichie tetchénia lingvistítcheskoi mýsli na Západe.  
**Literatura i Marksizm**, Leningrado, v.5, p. 115-149, 1928.

Received in october 2016

Approved in march 2017